



Jessica Peill-Meininghaus works on a felted gnome at her studio in Burnham.

MICKY BEDELL | BDN

## Felt

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more control and dimension. She would spend weeks wet felting for a single project and still be left wanting more. Then one day she found exactly what she'd always dreamed possible — some very small felted animals. And she asked the artist who made them, simply, “How?”

“They just said you take felt and poke it with this special felting needle. And I didn’t believe them. I felt, it can’t be that simple — nothing is that simple,” she said, shaking her head as though she still couldn’t believe it. “And it really is. It is that simple.”

Jessica found herself in “a whole new world.” She calls it “gnoming.” And who’s to say these little guys aren’t art? I think



Colorful felt is piled together in Jessica Peill-Meininghaus’ attic studio in Burnham.

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they’re beautiful. They certainly make me smile. And as Jessica puts it, there’s always room for a little bit more wonder and innocence in the world.

So you keep waving that gnome flag, Jessica. And whatever other wonderfulness comes into your head. Keep letting your art speak its bit of magic.

Visual journalist Micky Bedell writes about Maine’s makers on her blog *Made in Maine*. Check her out online at [bedell.bangordailynews.com](http://bedell.bangordailynews.com).

## Concerts

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Mountains such as the 751-foot-tall Mount Jefferson, Zimmerman said, “absorb sound in a great, great way, much better than when you’re playing to an open field.”

“You feel the bass sound a long way up the mountain. I have been to other festivals on mountains and you can really enjoy the sound. All the trees will help muffle the sound [from disturbing neighbors] and keep it full,” Zimmerman said. “It’s almost like a natural amphitheater.”

Selectman Aaron Knowles said town leaders are hopeful that Zimmerman’s plans will help draw many new businesses to Lee, which had a population of 922 according to the 2010 census and is located east of Lincoln near Interstate 95’s exit 227.

Zimmerman met with the Board of Selectmen on Monday and expressed an interest in being a good neighbor — working to keep the neighborhood undisturbed by activities at his venue.

“He expressed to us that he wanted to start slowly and work cautiously and he seemed to have the right attitude about working with townspeople,” Knowles said.

The slow and cautious approach, Zimmerman said, is important to making sure that he doesn’t overload the resort, which right now has permits for as many as 1,500 people.



Bostonian Tickets owner Kevin Zimmerman has added Matrix Pavilion, a concert venue, to the former Mount Jefferson Ski Area of Lee.

NICK SAMBIDES | BDN

Zimmerman, of Tewksbury, bought the 51-year-old Mount Jefferson Ski Area from the Delano family. He completed the purchase of the 160-acre parcel for an undisclosed price on Jan. 15. Zimmerman also purchased a 6-acre plot adjacent to the south side of his property Jan. 21.

Night skiing, camping, snow tubing and, eventually, outdoor concerts are among the activities Zimmerman said he wants to add to the ski area. He said he expects to spend close to \$100,000 this year turning the ski area into a music venue. His workers felled trees on about five acres this week and are starting a host of interior renovations to the facility.

He might get 10 more acts for Matrix Music Festival, which campers are welcome to attend, and hopes to draw as many as 1,500 people to the shows. Tickets are available at [matrixmusicfestival.com](http://matrixmusicfestival.com) and will go on sale at the Route 6 business in April, he said.

The portable stage, Zimmerman said, will likely be built in what is now the parking lot, which he hopes to have paved. It will face toward the mountain, with plenty of open area for people to set out tents or chairs.

“We’re going to start to do hopefully five to 10 concerts this year and have hopefully bluegrass music, country, rock. Maybe some electronic,” Zimmerman said. “Just music of all different types for

all different types of people.”

Eventually, his business could grow to host concerts that draw 10,000 to 30,000 people, he said, which would rival Darling’s Waterfront Pavilion in Bangor, an open-air amphitheater that seats 16,000. But at 1,500, his venue is a smaller, more intimate alternative to Darling’s that could draw some of the same acts, he said.

“I have been to festivals on other mountains that are almost the same size as this,” Zimmerman said. “It’s the same layout, it’s the same thing. As a ticket broker for the last 10 years, I have seen the live entertainment business grow and how festivals are going to be becoming big. It’s like taking my career, my business, to the next level.”

## Folio

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The quote above was pulled directly from the play and is spoken by Shylock, one of his most dramatic and thought-provoking characters (in my opinion). Shylock is a mystery: should you love him or hate him? Is he a villain or is his apparent villainy defensible? To me, Shylock is simply a human — one who has lost almost everything and has the right to be bitter, especially considering the treatment he has endured. Better yet, he taught me an important lesson, one applicable even in this day and age — that lesson is found in the quote above — I’ll let you

decipher it in whatever way you see fit. Better yet, read the entire play, as it is a literary triumph and changed my entire attitude toward this master of the written word.

You’re probably wondering why I’ve gone on about Shakespeare — well, it’s because a very important part of the history of his works is on display in the Portland Public Library. One of the very books that gave us Shakespeare, the First Folio, is on exhibit at the library through April 2, and though I haven’t been able to see it myself (yet), I encourage any fan of Shakespeare to take the trip to check it out.

The First Folio is important because without it we would not have some of Shakespeare’s most famous

works, including “Macbeth,” “Julius Caesar,” “Twelfth Night,” “The Tempest” and “Antony and Cleopatra.” Of the 36 plays found in the First Folio, 18 of them would never have graced today’s literary landscape if not for this collection where they were first published, according to the Portland Public Library.

“There are 233 known copies in the world today, with 82 copies held by the Folger Shakespeare Library. One of the most valuable printed books in the world, a First Folio sold for \$6.2 million in 2001 at Christie’s and another one for \$5.2 million in 2006 in London. It originally sold for one British pound (20 shillings) — about \$200 today,” the library’s website reads.

The best part about the First Folio is that it was published by two of Shakespeare’s fellow actors after he died in order to preserve the magnificent entertainment he had provided communities for many years.

This year marks the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare’s death. The Portland Public Library is one of only five public libraries that will display the First Folio as it tours all 50 states. It’s free and open to everyone. The library is open from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Thursday, 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday and 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Saturday.

So go take a visit if you’re in the area. I have an inkling that Shakespeare devotees won’t be disappointed.

## Cut the carcinogen in your french fries

MAYO CLINIC NEWS NETWORK

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration is issuing guidance to the food industry on how to reduce levels of acrylamide — a chemical that forms in foods cooked at high heat, such as french fries and potato chips.

“Acrylamide is a chemical formed when an amino acid (asparagine) reacts with sugar,” said Dr. Donald Hensrud, medical director of the Mayo Clinic Healthy Living Program. “It’s been demonstrated as causing cancer in animals and is classified as ‘reasonably anticipated to be a carcinogen in humans’ (as opposed to proven car-

cinogens, such as asbestos).

“It is difficult to know exactly what safe levels are in the food supply or in our bodies, so the FDA is taking the approach of providing guidelines to the food industry to voluntarily do what they can to decrease acrylamide,” he said. “This involves things, such as not heating food to extremely high temperatures, choosing varieties of potatoes that are low in acrylamide and other methods.”

Hensrud recommends that consumers follow a healthy eating plan consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, which may help to keep acrylamide levels low.



COURTESY OF LINDA ANDREWS

Linda Andrews wrote a book on grieving, “Please Bring Soup To Comfort Me While I Grieve,” which came out in January 2016. Andrews of Auburn lost her husband to a heart attack in September 2011 just two weeks after burying her father.

## Book

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“One of the most important things I wanted to say through my book is that spouse loss is not the same as any other, but [loss] connects people even though it is different,” she said. “It was very scary to put my book out there, but my need to help other people is overwhelming.”

She pointed out that loss is more than death. It can be related to jobs, divorce, health and other areas. Any loss involves some form of grief, but Andrews’ book ultimately is for someone who is grieving a loved one. She said she tried to make it clear there’s no right way or wrong way to grieve — only your way.

Besides pearls of wisdom sprinkled throughout Andrews’ book, she offers a “Grieving Toolkit,” which lists suggestions and resources to help people cope with their grief.

Having passed the four-year mark since her hus-

band’s death, Andrews said she is starting to involve herself more in life. She had a glimpse of hope about life when she finished her book and now has more hope. She is getting more comfortable with social situations, but still is trying to figure out who she is.

“I’m OK. I’m definitely not the same person — just different. I can talk about things I couldn’t two years ago. I can use the word ‘widow.’ I don’t like it, but can use it. ... I’m better but still a work in progress,” she said.

Andrews has become a self-described “ambassador of grief.” Besides publishing her book and having one-on-one discussions with people, she has established a Facebook page “Please Bring Soup” for the sharing of grief tips and stories and a website, [lindalandreows.com](http://lindalandreows.com), that contains grief support information.

Andrews’ last piece of advice? “You don’t have to do crazy things to help someone. It can be something simple — like a bowl of soup.”

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